

THE ELIXIR OF LOVE

MUSIC BY GAETANO DONIZETTI

LIBRETTO BY FELICE ROMANI

BROADCAST DATE: AUGUST 26, 2024

Conductor Roberto Kalb*

Director Stephen Lawless

Cast

Adina Yaritza Véliz*

Nemorino Jonah Hoskins+

Belcore Luke Sutliff+

Dulcamara Alfredo Daza*

Giannetta Cadie J. Bryan=*

The Santa Fe Opera Orchestra and Chorus

Music Director Harry Bicket; **Chorus Master** Susanne Sheston

*Santa Fe Opera debut, ~ American debut, +Former Santa Fe Opera Apprentice, =Current Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Singer

SYNOPSIS

Act I

Setting: 1935, An Italian Village

The villagers are ending their workday. Adina, a schoolteacher, reads from the story of *Tristan and Isolde* and the magic love potion. Nemorino, a less than clever mechanic, watches from a distance, hanging on Adina's every word. After the reading he approaches Adina and admits his desire for her. She shoos him away with brisk (and beautiful) words about the need for fickleness.

A traveling army arrives, led by Sergeant Belcore. When he learns Adina has the reputation of being the most beautiful and successful woman in town, he dedicates himself to wooing her. Adina seems impressed with the Sergeant, causing Nemorino a great deal of despair.

The Great Doctor Dulcamara arrives carrying pills and potions for all sorts of ailments. His is pushing his favorite concoction, a cure-all elixir.

Nemorino quietly asks the Doctor if he has the love potion of Queen Isolde. Absolutely, Dulcamara assures him., explaining it is a potion sure to bring fawning women. But the mechanic must wait a day for it to work. Unbeknownst to Nemorino, Dulcamara has never heard of Isolde, this concoction is simply a cheap wine, and the day of waiting will give the doctor the perfect timeline for escape.

Nemorino downs the "potion", and, thanks to a placebo effect, he feels confident enough to ignore Adina the next time he sees her. Adina is disturbed at his coolness, so she consents to

marry Belcore. And when the Sergeant is called back to duty, she agrees to marry him right away. The desperate Nemorino begs her to wait another day.

ACT II

Adina's Wedding

Adina refuses to sign the marriage contract until Nemorino arrives. Nemorino, convinced of the elixir's power, asks Doctor Dulcamara for more of the delightful substance. But when Nemorino confesses he has no money, the doctor sends him away. Sergeant Belcore strides by, puzzled by Adina's postponement of the wedding. When he learns that Nemorino is penniless, he suggests that the lovestruck mechanic join his army to get their volunteer bonus. Nemorino agrees and immediately takes the cash back to Dulcamara for another bottle.

The village girls have learned Nemorino's uncle just passed, leaving him a fortune. They surround the poor mechanic. Not having heard the news of his good fortune, he assumes their affections are caused by the effect of the elixir.

Adina, feeling responsible for Nemorino's enlistment, shifts to jealousy and sadness when she sees him surrounded by other women. Dr. Dulcamara, committed to his scam, offers her the elixir, but she assures him she can win Nemorino back on her own.

In midst of the chaos, Nemorino notices a tear upon Adina's cheek, surely a sign of new love for him. Adina approaches Nemorino and shows him that she has bought back his military contract. He pretends to be uninterested until she finally confesses her love. Sergeant Belcore, strutting by, discovers Adina and Nemorino together, and consoles himself by proclaiming the world is full of women who will have him. Dulcamara takes the opportunity to promote his magical elixir: the only substance on earth that can make poor men into millionaires, and bring them true love.